GODSEND iNTRO

Handouts

Session 4

How do new worshipping communities integrate with the parish?

Strengthening ties with the parent congregation - some ideas

1. From as early a stage as possible, print out your weekly notice sheet and scatter it on the tables of your initiative. (Make sure the initiative is mentioned on the news sheet!) As the community's guests glance at the sheet, they will become aware they are part of something bigger. Maybe they'll volunteer to help in the parish. ("I see you are forming a choir for the carol service, can I join?" "I see you are looking for administrative assistance. Can I help?)

2. Share social activities, such as a quiz evening or family fun day. Involve your initiative in arranging the activity. Members will feel part of the whole if they give to it.

3. Invite members to special services - at Christmas and Easter, for example. Don't let them huddle in a group over coffee after the service, not feeling very involved. Arrange for them to help serve the coffee so that they are at the heart of the action! It'll be a great way for them to start building friendships.

4. Form joint outreach and study groups of interest to members of both the initiative and the parent congregation - eg on ecology or social justice; a craft, Bible study or book group; a "no holds barred" group to discuss difficult questions about faith; a group for contemplative prayer. Or arrange one-off study evenings on topics with wide appeal.

5. Invite members of the initiative to Christian events elsewhere - a festival, conference or retreat perhaps.

6. Invite new Christians to join your church-giving scheme and explain why generosity is a fundamental part of following Christ.

7. When your initiative becomes a new worshipping community, make sure it is properly represented in your church governance.

What shall we do next?

Choose from the following:

- Look at or revisit one of the other sessions.
- One or two people read Chapters 15 and 16 in Michael Moynagh, Godsend, or the equivalent sessions on godsend.cloud, and share what they found at the next meeting.
- For those who want, next time the group meets share a particular demographic group you would like to reach, and/or one or two people you might ask to support you.
- Come up with a better next step.